

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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P R 020032Z MAY 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO ALL NATO CAPITALS PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MADRID  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA  
USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
INFO USDEL MC BRUSSELS  
USDOC SOUTH NAPLES IT

S E C R E T STATE 111023

EXDIS--MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, MT

SUBJECT: MALTA-NATO: MINTOFF INVITATION TO CINCSOUTH

REFS: (A) USDOCOSOUTH 150904Z APR 78  
(B) VALLETTA 969, DTG 181505Z APR 78  
(C) STATE 102878, DTG 220155Z APR 78  
(D) STATE 103675, DTG 221702Z APR 78  
(E) VALLETTA 1051, DTG 250811Z APR 78

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(F) STATE 90253, DTG 072321Z APR 78

USNMR SHAPE FOR GENERAL HAIG

USDOCOSOUTH FOR ADMIRAL SHEAR

1. ADMIRAL SHEAR'S DETAILED ACCOUNT OF CALL ON HIM BY

HONORARY MALTESE CONSUL GENERAL DI GIANNI (REFTEL A) AND EMBASSY VALLETTA'S EVALUATION OF MINTOFF INVITATION TO SHEAR WHICH DI GIANNI PRESENTED (REFTEL B) WERE HELPFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR ANALYSIS OF CURRENT MINTOFF PLOY TO WORRY ALLIES INTO UNDERWRITING EXPENSES OF MALTESE NEUTRALITY AFTER 1979. MALTESE HAVE ALSO SENT LETTERS TO PRESIDENT CARTER (REFTELS C AND D) AND TO FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT (SEPTTEL), AND WE WOULD EXPECT THAT OTHER ALLIES WILL SOON BE REPORTING SIMILAR MISSIVES.

2. IT APPEARS THAT MINTOFF MAY NOW BE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED THAT HE WILL FIND HIMSELF HOLDING AN EMPTY BAG IN 1979. WE CANNOT, OF COURSE, RULE OUT COMPLETELY THE POSSIBILITY THAT MINTOFF MIGHT FOLLOW THE SINGAPORE PRECEDENT BY OPENING MALTESE PORT FACILITIES TO BOTH NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT. HOWEVER, MALTA'S GENERAL WESTERN ORIENTATION AND MINTOFF'S FEAR THAT THE MALTESE WOULD BE UNABLE TO CONTROL A SIGNIFICANT SOVIET PRESENCE ON THE ISLAND APPEAR REAL ENOUGH TO MINIMIZE THIS RISK. THUS, WITH CURRENT ASSESSMENTS CONTINUING TO INDICATE THAT MALTA WILL BE ABLE TO MEET HER POST-1979 ECONOMIC NEEDS (REFTEL E), WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT PRIMARY U.S. GOAL OF DENYING MALTA TO SOVIETS (REFTEL F) WILL BE SUPPORTED BY SHOWING MINIMUM CONCERN AT THIS TIME FOR SUCH A POSSIBILITY.

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3. IF DI GIANNI RAISES VISIT TO MALTA AGAIN, WE SUGGEST THAT ADMIRAL SHEAR MIGHT ADD FOLLOWING TO HIS PREVIOUS COMMENTS WHEN REPEATING HIS REGRET OF MINTOFF INVITATION:

A. IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR A SENIOR NATO COMMANDER TO VISIT MALTA DURING FINAL STAGES OF NATO DISENGAGEMENT FROM THE ISLAND.

B. SUCH A VISIT COULD ALSO BE SEEN TO BE IN CONFLICT WITH THE DISCUSSIONS VARIOUS WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ARE HAVING WITH MALTA IN PREPARING FOR ITS POST-1979 STATUS.

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## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** MILITARY PERSONNEL, POLICIES, INVITATIONS, MEETINGS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION  
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